

One Life's Journey

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One Life's Journey

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Medium- (emotion) Surprise

Hard- (restriction) No Dialogue

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><p>The baby girl that would grow to become the fearsome warrior Smellerbee was born to farmers in the Earth Kingdom. She was born Meifeng Leoi. The labor was very hard on Meifeng's mother; it took almost a full day and there were many moments where the midwife worried that either Meifeng or her mother would not make it through. Meifeng's father refused to give up hope and stayed with his wife throughout the entire process. But the day of her birth was destined a joyous time for her parents. They had been told that they would never have children so when the moment finally came that Meifeng's mother held her in her arms, she laughed. Her mother laughed because she had been given the only gift she ever wanted. She laughed because the joy she felt for Meifeng's safe entry into the world could no longer be contained. It spilled out of her in droves filling the room in the most infectious way until everyone in the room was laughing, and their sides were aching and tears glistened in their eyes. Meifeng's father knew from the first moment he held her that he would struggle to tell her no, and would strive to give her everything she

could ever need in this world. He knew he could never be truly happy unless all of her needs were met. Meifeng was her parent's pride and joy from the moment she entered the world, and she would remain that way until they left it.<p>

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><p>It had been eight years since Meifeng had shed that name and been given the name Smellerbee. Eight years since the Fire Nation had burned her home to the ground with her parents in it. Eight years since she had found a new family with the Freedom Fighters. Four years had passed since the Avatar had defeated the Fire Lord and balance was beginning to return to the world. And now here she was being led down the forest path that led to the old Freedom Fighters' home by the man who had become everything to her. When they had first met they had both been scared kids running from their pasts and trying to make a difference in the big world. They had been nothing more than strangers with similar tragic stories; all the Freedom Fighters had known the pain of losing their families to the land dominating machine that was the Fire Nation. But they had quickly become inseparable, which Jet had always said was for the best because Smellerbee was the only one who had an innate understanding of Longshot's silent communication. She had understood him from the moment he had bandaged her burns. It made them an effective fighting pair. Smellerbee was fast with a knife and her small size made her quite slippery in close quarters combat. Longshot was easily the best archer in the group but he was not the strongest physical fighter. So, when they ended up in battle Smellerbee could often be found quite near where ever Longshot had chosen for his perch. Their silent communication made it easy to communicate in the loud skirmishes the Freedom Fighters often found themselves in.<p>

Longshot stopped in front of the old ropes they used to use to enter the tree house. A look of worry about the age of the untended ropes crossed his face. Smellerbee grabbed a rope with a grin on her face and gave it a swift tug. She shot up, wind whipping around her face. Smellerbee landed with a strong thud on the old wooden decking, quickly followed by the light tap of Longshot landing next to her. The old place still looked much the same as when they had left it a little over three years ago. The cobbled together shacks were still standing and the pathways that connected the trees were still there. However nature had begun the process of reclaiming that which the Freedom Fighters had borrowed. Tree branches had grown into and around shacks and through pathways. Vines were creeping along the sides of the shacks and dripping off the roofs. The purple vine flowers gave the place an odd pop of cheery color that seemed out of place for a place that held so many memories touched with sadness for Smellerbee.

Smellerbee and Longshot wandered through the old pathways and through the meeting areas. They stopped in the dining hall and remembered the happy times. They had shed a few tears for Jet when they remembered his rousing speeches. Then they wandered over to the shack they used to share. It was still the same, small and looking like it should fall over at any moment. Bee had nightmares about that happening when she had first joined. She reached up and traced the pictures of a knife and bow she had roughly carved there some months after joining the Freedom Fighters. When she had done it, she told Longshot it was to mark their home. Pulling her hand away from the carvings she pulled the door open. It stuck a little but not terribly so. As she

entered the small one roomed shack, she heard Longshot lean against the door frame. His shadow stretched across the worn floorboards. They stood that way for a long while. Smellerbee just inside the room and Longshot behind her taking it all in. This room had been their safe haven from the time they were ten until they followed Jet to Ba Sing Se. This room is where they had laughed, cried, fought, and bandaged each other. This room was everything to them; it's where their friendship began.

Longshot reached out and gently touched Smellerbee's shoulder to get her attention. As she turned around Longshot knelt down on one knee and pulled a small box out of his pocket. Surprise flickered across her face as it dawned on her what Longshot was about to do. Smellerbee's mouth formed an "o" and her hands quickly smothered the gasp that followed. He opened the box to reveal a small gold band adorned with only a small emerald. Their eyes met and in that glance everything they ever needed to say to each other passed between them. His question, her answer, the love they felt for each other, the journey that had begun in this room and the path they wanted to take side by side into the future. Happy tears threatened to spill out of Smellerbee's eyes as Longshot stood and placed the ring on her finger. Their lips met in a tender loving kiss and all was right in their little world.

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><p>Smellerbee lay in the bed she had shared with Longshot for their entire marriage right up until death had taken him from her two years earlier. Her son and daughter sat on either side of bed holding her time worn hands. She turned her gaze to her son's face, he shared the same round face and thick brown hair as his mother but he had inherited his father's quiet demeanor. Behind him stood his wife holding their young son, she was a lovely woman who Smellerbee had liked from the instant she met her. On her other side sat her daughter, the spitting image of her father but with same fiery spirit that had driven her mother. She had not yet taken a husband but Smellerbee was certain that she would find her path. Smellerbee weakly raised her children's hands to her lips and placed a gentle kiss on both of them. She lowered their hands and gave them each a warm smile. Then she closed her eyes and exhaled her last breath, the smile still on her face.<p>

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